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**Wright Area North Hilight Field
Record of Decision Available from Wyoming High Plains District Office**

The Record of Decision (ROD) for the North Hilight Field Coal Lease Application, part of the Final Wright Area Coal Lease Applications Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), is now available for review from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Wyoming State Office in Cheyenne and the Wyoming High Plains District Office in Casper.

On Oct. 7, 2005, Ark Land Company applied for federal coal reserves in two maintenance tracts encompassing approximately 4,590.19 acres and 588.2 million tons of coal. The tracts are adjacent to the Black Thunder Mine operated by Thunder Basin Coal Company. The BLM determined that the application would be processed as two separate tracts which are referred to as the North Hilight Field tract and the South Hilight Field tract.

Including the North Hilight Field, the Wright Area Coal EIS analyzed the proposed leasing six federal coal tracts located in the Wyoming portion of the Powder River Basin. The EIS disclosed to the public direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of issuing a federal coal lease in the Wright area. A separate record of decision will be issued for each tract that was analyzed in the EIS.

The BLM has approved Alternative 2, which was the preferred alternative for this LBA in the Wright Area Coal Final EIS. Under Alternative 2, the North Hilight Field tract will be offered for lease at a competitive sealed-bid sale. Under the selected configuration, the tract includes 4,529.79 acres, more or less, and the BLM estimates that the tract contains approximately 467,596,000 tons of mineable federal coal resources in Campbell County, Wyo. The selected configuration for the North Hilight Field includes approximately 1,916.29 acres of additional lands from the BLM study area. The final configuration was selected because it allows for more efficient recovery of the federal coal, decreases the amount of bypassed Federal coal in the area, and best serves the public interest. A competitive coal lease sale will be announced in the *Federal Register* at a later date.

This decision is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) as provided in 43 CFR 4 within 30 days from the date of publication of the notice of availability in the *Federal Register*. The ROD contains instructions for filing an appeal with the IBLA.

Copies of the ROD are available for public inspection online at: www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/hpd/Wright-Coal.html or at the following BLM offices:

Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming High Plains District Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, WY 82604

For more information, contact Al Elser at (307) 261-7600.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.

--BLM--

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